

# FURY FOCUS

June 2007 Volume 1, Issue 4

**Task Force Professional:  
All Guns Blazing  
in Khowst!!!**



***from the sky***

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## On the cover



*An 82nd Airborne Division artilleryman shields his ears from the blast of a 155 millimeter howitzer while firing at a target in eastern Afghanistan. The howitzer is crewed by Paratroopers from the 2nd Battalion, 321st Airborne Field Artillery Regiment, and artillerymen from the Puerto Rico National Guard's 1st Bn. 162nd FAR. (Photo by Pfc. Micah E. Clare/Task Force Fury/PAO)*

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# Fury 6: Farewell 2/87, welcome 1/503, PBG

This past month has been a difficult one for our formations in terms of sacrifice and loss.

Since the last Fury Focus update in late April, our Task Force has lost three brothers in arms.

We mourn the loss of our comrades: Maj. Larry Bauguess, Operations Officer for 508th Special Troops Battalion; Spc. Jeremy Green of 2nd Battalion, 87 Infantry, 10th Mountain Division and Pfc. Joseph G. Harris of 2nd Battalion, 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment. Our hearts and prayers continue to go out to their families and friends.

I would like to thank the fine soldiers of Task Force Catamount as they head back to Fort Drum to be reunited with family and friends.

I have had the opportunity to work with many formations and units over the years; I have seen none finer than the Spartan Team.

They coached and mentored our formations upon arrival and they never stopped getting after it, conducting operations literally to the last day.

The people of Afghanistan and the United States owe all these fine Soldiers a great debt of gratitude.

With the passing of one formation comes the arrival of two other great teams.

We welcome our newest partners from the 1st Battalion, 503rd Parachute Infantry Regiment and from the Polish Battle group.

The pace is fast and the road is bumpy but working alongside our Coalition and Afghan partners, we cannot fail.

As the summer falls upon Afghanistan and the weather continues



**Fury 6**  
**COL Martin P. Schweitzer**

to get hotter, it is critical that we stay focused and prepared.

The enemy will try to flex its limited muscle as the weather permits them greater freedom of movement. Stay vigilant, physically and mentally fit, and keep your eye on your airborne buddy.

Due to your hard work and continued pressure on the enemy, the insurgents are being separated from the populace and the environment is continually being transformed, allowing greater effects in terms of security, governance, and infrastructure.

We must continue to refine and reevaluate our policies, procedures and battle rhythms; the insurgents are looking for patterns and areas to exploit.

Do not let your guard down.

Let's continue to build on what we have learned and continue to assist, mentor and coach our Afghan partners.

The enemy is losing and getting more desperate everyday, so keep pressing on to the Ranger Objective.

The Afghan people continue to show their support for their government and security forces.

The actions and efforts of all the Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, families and civilians are changing the lives and bringing hope to millions of Afghan people.

Keep getting after it!

All the way! Fury from the Sky!

**Fury 6**

# Fury 9: Congrats to Audie Murphy selectees

The start of the warm weather is upon us here in Afghanistan and I'm sure families and loved ones are beginning to feel it as well back home!

Remember to drink water and stay hydrated as the heat continues to increase.

I would like to remind all of the Task Force Fury families and friends that your troopers are doing great things for our nation and the folks here in Afghanistan.

As some of you may have heard there, a little moving around has been going on as we welcome the soldiers of the Polish Battle Group and 1st Battalion, 503rd Parachute Infantry Regiment to our formation and the troopers from Task Force Fury make it look easy.

Our team has accomplish so much in so little time that we all look forward to the next month to see what new improvements will be made.

The Brigade Commander and I are proud of those 100 plus new noncommissioned officers we have promoted in in our ranks throughout our time here so far and the numbers will continue to rise as we board more deserving and ready specialists.

We also welcomed 13 new NCOs from our formation into the Sergeant Audie Murphy club.



**Fury 9**  
**CSM Richard Flowers**

These NCOs, who are the best of the best, went through a rigorous selection process before being selected.

It is a great honor and something that will follow them for the rest of their careers.

Task Force Fury is also proud of the spouses back home that have recieved the prestiges recognition of a Dr. Mary Walker award for all the work they do supporting our team.

This is an incredible task especially while deployed in combat for both sets of awardees.

Spouses again we commend you all for your abilities to take care of the home front while we are gone.

We would not be able to do any of the things we do without your support and love.

In closing I hope all of you got a chance to take a moment to remember all those who gave the price of freedom on Memorial Day this year.

If it was not for those who came before us, and gave their lives for our great country, we would not be here today to perform the mission at hand.

All the way! Fury from the Sky!

**Fury 9**

# Weapon discharges fall on leadership

**Hans Balke**

*Task Force Fury Safety*

Negligent discharges used to be called accidental discharges, but to put the onus more on the operator and less on the weapon the term has changed.

There is no standardized definition in the Department of Defense for accidental discharge, or the newer term negligent discharge or the newest term unauthorized or inadvertent discharge.

Merriam-Webster defines accidental as "occurring unexpectedly or by chance... and...happening without intent or through carelessness and often with unfortunate results."

This may sound like an appropriate definition for Accidental Discharge, as "he shot him unexpectedly and without intent."

The term "accidental discharge" implies to some that the weapon is at fault. Weapons do sometimes fire accidentally but this would be caused by a mechanical malfunction.

Merriam-Webster defines negligent as "implies inattention to one's duty or business...and...not taking prudent care." For example, he shot him because the shooter was inattentive to what he was doing. This implies that the originator of the discharge is more often the cause than the weapon.

Which term should be used can be the subject of another debate, but for simplicity and to avoid confusion I will use the term negligent discharge.

A negligent discharge is caused by either the operator or the weapon.

Statistically, the three causal factors of an accident with a weapon are human, material, and environment. The human factor accounts for about 80%.

During Fiscal Year 03-04 in Operation Iraqi Freedom weapons handling errors produced more than 96 reported negligent discharges, resulting in 19 fatalities (Countermeasure Vol. 25 No. 7).

Since the beginning of FY07 the Army

experienced five fatalities, five partial or complete paralyzes, and nine other types of injuries due to negligent discharges according to the U.S. Army Combat Readiness Center Risk Management Information System which maintains accident statistics.

What can be done to reduce the high 80% human error rate?

The USACRC found that the main cause of accidental discharge is that soldier's fail to follow established procedures regarding weapons handling as reported in the story "Gunning for Safety," from the October 2004 issue of the NCO Journal.

From Feb 06 to Jan 07 there were a total of 114 reported NDs in Regional Command East. The majority of which occurred in the clearing barrel.

Weapon clearing standards are required to be posted by each clearing barrel; the clearing procedure is required to be supervised, so how can a ND still occur?

This might be due to the fact that the posted last step is to pull the trigger. But if the clearing procedures were followed correctly the weapon should not fire.

A discharge at the clearing barrel is both a negligent act by the soldier and the supervisor.

Since our arrival we have done no better than our peers. We are actually on a path to surpass last year's numbers if we do not take corrective action now.

Policy states and requires that every ND is a reportable event.

It can be assumed that the actual ND rate is higher than the reported rate as many soldiers and supervisor may fear UCMJ action if they report the incident.

To eliminate or reduce the possibility of a mechanical defect we do a functions check of the weapon. A functions check on a weapon is done to first of all ensure the weapon will fire as required when engaged in combat and second that it will not fire when the trigger is not pulled.

A function check is always the last step in the maintenance process and helps reduce the chance of a discharge due to mechanical

reasons.

So, who's responsible?

First of all there is always individual responsibility. Individual responsibility not only means ensuring your weapon is on safe and pointed in a safe direction but also to ensure that you maintain awareness of the weapons status of those around you.

Together watching out for each other and paying attention to detail we can prevent any further preventable discharges and injuries.

This is just a quick visual check that the soldier in front of you in the mess hall line has got his or her weapon on safe and letting them know if it is not.

Second, there is the leader or supervisor responsibility. Combined Joint Task Force-82 policy is that all weapons cleaning and weapons clearing procedures are supervised by a noncommissioned officer.

So with two pairs of eyes on the weapon during cleaning and clearing procedures it should prevent all NDs, except the rare occasion of a mechanical failure.

The following steps are simple, but effective and if practiced and supervised should go a long way toward reducing that 80% human error and prevent negligent discharges.

**T**reat every weapon as if it is loaded.

**H**andle every weapon with care.

**I**dentify the target before you fire.

**N**ever point the muzzle at anything you don't intend to shoot.

**K**eeper the weapon on safe and your finger off the trigger until you intend to fire.

Supervise Soldiers during weapons clearing and ensure they understand and maintain weapons in the appropriate status.

Doing the above will ensure your safety and the safety of others. The life you save may be your own.

**You can "*BE SAFE*" if,  
*Standards Are Fully Enforced***



# New Sabari District Center To Provide Better Security

**Pfc. Micah E. Clare**

*Task Force Fury PAO*

FORWARD OPERATING BASE CHAPMAN, Afghanistan—Sabari District elders celebrated the construction of a new district center during a ground breaking ceremony May 16 just outside of the town of Yaqubi in Khowst Province, Afghanistan.

The event was attended by Khowst Governor Arsala Jamal and Navy Cmdr. Dave Adams, commander of the Khowst Provincial Reconstruction Team, and district Sub-governor Gul-Quasim Jihadyar.

During the meeting, several of the elders addressed their opinions on the progress of security and projects in the district to Governor Jamal, who answered their questions.

After the meeting, the crowd moved to the proposed site of the new district center, where Governor Jamal and Adams laid the building's first stone.

The new district center is meant to replace the current one located in the center of Yaqubi, said Army Cpt. Greg Kellough, team leader for the PRT's Civil Affairs Team Alpha, who is stationed in the area.

The district center serves as a town office and houses the district sub-governor and the town's security forces. It is used to hold town meetings with local elders, where they come to meet with the sub-governor and present the needs of their people, he explained.

From a security standpoint, the current district center's location and size put it at a disadvantage, Kellough said.

"It's located in the middle of town, right on the main road and surrounded by other buildings," he said. "This new site is farther out from the town, allowing for 360 degrees of security, and a farther line of sight."



*Photos by Pfc. Micah Clare/Task Force Fury PAO*

**Elders from the Sabari District of Khowst Province, Afghanistan, pray before laying the first stone of a new district center during a ceremony May 16 in the District of Sabari. The new district center will provide better security for the area's residents.**



*Photos by Pfc. Micah Clare/Task Force Fury PAO*

**Adams is the commander of the Khowst Provincial Reconstruction Team based in Forward Operating Base Chapman. Navy Cmdr. Dave Adams and the Governor of Afghanistan's Khowst Province, Arsala Jamal, cut the ribbon signifying the start of construction on a new district center during a ceremony May 16 in the District of Sabari.**

The new district center is of a more modern and efficient design, valued at \$240,000. It will have a kitchen area, bathrooms, and a fully functional police headquarters.

This expanded area will allow for an increase of security forces, said acting Deputy Police Chief Gul-Rahim.

"We're going to place more checkpoints and do everything we can to increase security in this area with these new assets," he said.

The new district center is scheduled to receive a joint garrison of Afghan National Army and Policemen, said Gul-Qasim.

"I know security is going to get even better," he said.

The project was started when elders went through the process of bringing their needs to the government, Kellough said.

"We want them to know that those who get a lot done are the ones who go through this process," he said. "The governor, not us, is the one who decides what will be built, and the things that get built, we want them to last."

One elder voiced his thoughts during the meeting on the need to work with the government.

"Having the government working for us is like having salt in your food, without it, the food doesn't taste good," he said.



# Provincial Reconstruction Team Kh the Fight Against the Enemy Near

**Pfc. Micah E. Clare**  
*Task Force Fury PAO*

FORWARD OPERATING BASE SALERNO, Afghanistan-- Less than 10 miles from training camps that produced many of the 9/11 hijackers, a team of Coalition servicemembers are working together to make sure the area once home to Osama Bin Laden's terrorist organization becomes an environment that will deny such people a safe

haven ever again.

But for this joint service team, spearheading the fight against terrorism in eastern Afghanistan's Khowst Province doesn't involve executing kinetic military operations, but in providing reconstruction assistance.

The Khowst Provincial Reconstruction Team, based in Forward Operating Base Chapman near

Khowst City, serves as the main effort in rebuilding Khowst Province by distributing humanitarian aid, mentoring local government officials, planning for

construction projects and providing security for important events, said Navy Cmdr. Dave Adams, commander of the Khowst PRT.

"We're a reconstruction organization, with a military arm," Adams said.

PRTs were established in Afghanistan when it was realized in 2003 that manoeuvre units needed to focus on winning the security fight, and a separate military organization was required to head up the on the badly needed reconstruction efforts.

The US Navy and US Air Force answered the call and stepped up to assist, explained Adams, a submarine officer of 21 years who volunteered for this command.

A team of military advisors, United States Aid representatives and Department of State officials, was put together as a PRT, a board of directors working to synchronize their efforts and resources.

Together, they act as a direct line of communication from the needs of the people to the aid offered to them by the International Security Assistance Forces, he said.

The Khowst PRT has brought much of this assistance to the province in the past few years by sending its Army Civil Affairs teams to live in local communities, who send back updates on area needs.

Many construction projects such as irrigation systems, diversion dams, wells, schools, and roads have been set into motion by the PRT in this way, Adams said.

"These projects serve not only to improve the quality of life for the residents, but also to put shovels in the people's hands, providing them with jobs," Adams said.

A big part in bringing these quality of life improvements is the necessity for security, he said.

*Navy Cmdr. Dave Adams and the Governor of Afghanistan's Khowst Province, Arsala Jamal, talk before the start of a ceremony May 16 in the District of Sabari. They are gathered to celebrate the construction of a new district center that will provide better security for the area's residents. Adams is the commander of the Khowst Provincial Reconstruction Team based in Forward Operating Base Chapman.*



# Khowst: Providing the Main Effort in Former Al-Qaeda Training Camps

This is where the PRT security force comes in, typically provided by the Army National Guard.

"Good security is vital for the PRT's mission to be successful," said Army 2nd Lt. Cory Marr, platoon leader for 2nd Platoon, Company B, 1st Battalion, 158th Infantry Regiment, Arizona National Guard, who provides security and manoeuvre support to the Khowst PRT.

The security is beginning to take care of itself, he said.

The overall security in Khowst has improved greatly, which is the result of locals seeing the many improvements that have come in the past year, the fruit of their efforts in securing a safe environment, Marr said.

This has allowed the PRT to extend its reach, he explained.

"There's no place we're afraid to go," Marr said. "We work with the Afghan National Security Forces and get plenty of intelligence from the locals. For instance, we stop at police checkpoints as we enter an area, and they update us on the local situation. We always have a good understanding of the areas we're going into."

"In the some of the more remote places we go, the locals have become extremely helpful to us," said Spc. Doug Schletz, an infantryman in 2nd Platoon. "They used to look at us like we were aliens, but recently they've seen what we're here to do for them, like seeing us helping the ANSF provide security for many of their events."

This increased security is so successful, international reconstruction agencies and foreign investors that have, in the past, shied away from helping Afghanistan due to safety concerns are being drawn back, Adams said.

Recently, a delegation from the United Arab Emirates arrived in Khowst City to visit projects they have invested in, such as the city university and main mosque.

Adams was able to confidently assure the delegates that any future projects built by their country would be safe in Khowst.

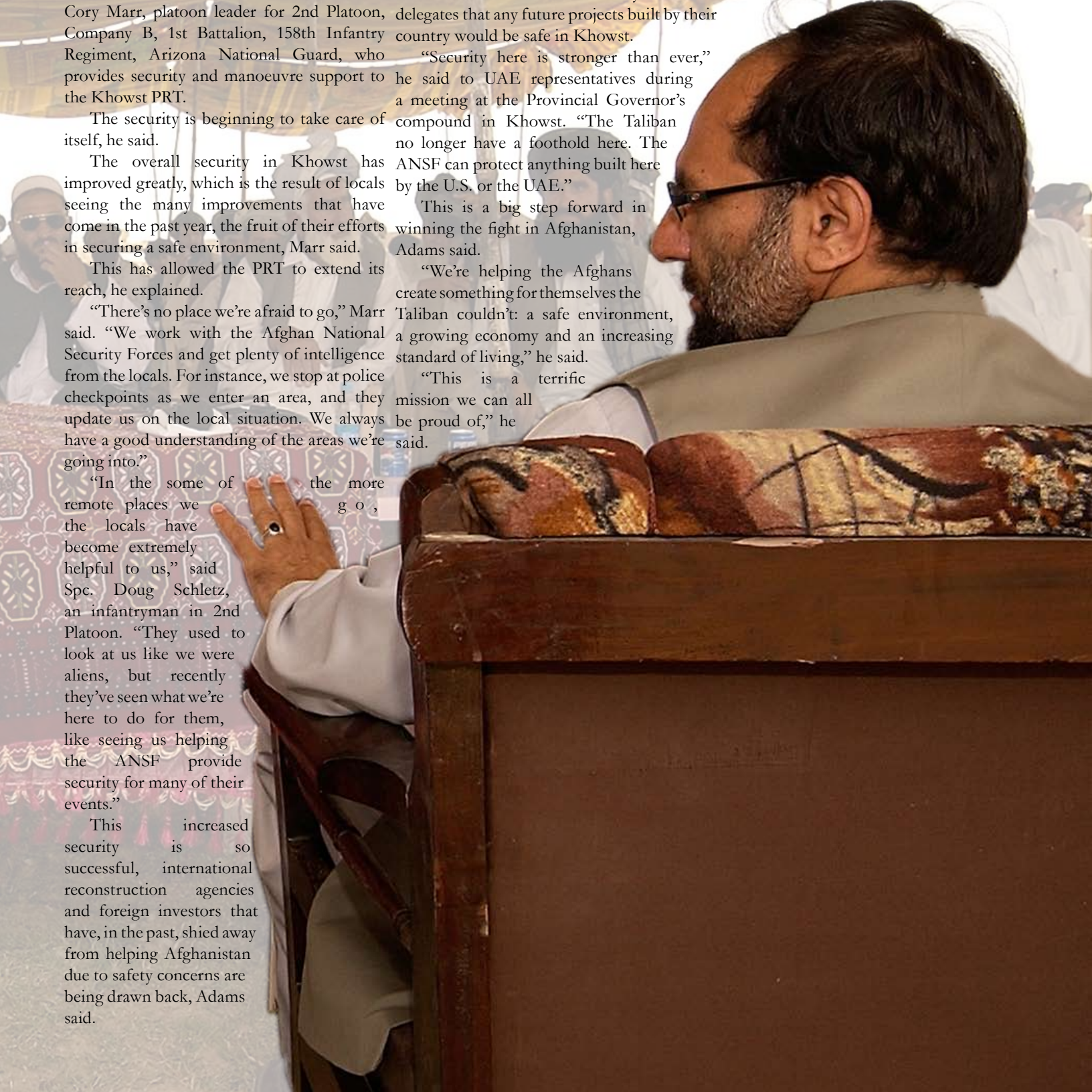
"Security here is stronger than ever," he said to UAE representatives during a meeting at the Provincial Governor's compound in Khowst. "The Taliban no longer have a foothold here. The ANSF can protect anything built here by the U.S. or the UAE."

This is a big step forward in winning the fight in Afghanistan, Adams said.

"We're helping the Afghans create something for themselves the Taliban couldn't: a safe environment, a growing economy and an increasing standard of living," he said.

"This is a terrific mission we can all be proud of," he said.

"By helping the Afghans permanently cast off the tyranny that the enemy brought to them and to us, we're providing hope to them and their children, and for us and our children."





# Paratroopers improve their base, morale close behind

**Spc. Matthew Leary**

*Task Force Fury PAO*

FIRE BASE WARDAK, Afghanistan – The ground is uneven, a mix of soft dirt and rocks, as if poised to trip any unsuspecting person that makes the short walk across the base, a walk that couldn't last any longer than a minute.

The only standing structures are three large, green tents, one building, and a 10 x 10 foot wooden shack.

Inside the tents, which are the main living quarters, sections of plywood have been fit together to make another uneven walking surface, although this one is considerably easier to walk on.

This is Fire Base Wardak, a small base occupied by Paratroopers from Company D, 2nd Battalion, 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, during their deployment in Afghanistan.

And while some may call it a spartan living arrangement, the Soldiers here call it something different: home.

"We love it here," said Spc. Jose R. Cruz, a grenadier with Co. D and native of Los Angeles.

Part of the reason the Paratroopers are so fond of their base, despite its obvious simplicity, is the fact that they took the initiative of improving it when they first arrived, said Army Capt. Aaron W. White, commander of Co. D.

Initially all that was present were a few barriers, one building, and wall as an outer perimeter, said Spc. Rueben D. Keenan, a gunner with Co. D and native of Gulf Shores, Al.

"Almost everything you see here now we built,"

Keenan said. "We built the bathrooms, put up tents to house more guys, built the motor pool, extended the perimeter, and we built a gym. We totally redid it."

"They have put a lot of hard work into this place," White said.

The process of improving the FOB meant the Soldiers worked a little each day on their infrastructure, said Spc. Chris A. Cox, a MK-19 grenade launcher gunner.

"Within a matter of a few weeks it was a more hospitable place to be," Cox said. "We took personal pride in our place, and we made it ours, and we're continuing to do things everyday."

The gym here is small, consisting of three cardiovascular workout machines and a handful of weights, all housed in a wooden building the troops made. But the troops like the small gym, using

it frequently for a quick workout, Cruz said.

And even though FOB Wardak offers limited creature comforts to its inhabitants, the Soldiers maintain an upbeat view.

"At least it is easy to maintain," Keenan joked.

With only their company here, the Paratroopers are bonding as a unit, concentrating solely on the mission at hand and each other, said White.

"Their morale is so high because they're operating at company level, they're out here doing their job," he said.

The Soldiers are going out conducting presence patrols, humanitarian aid missions, and coordinating with local government officials, Keenan said.

"This is all we do here, focus on the mission," he added.

Assisting the local citizens by conducting humanitarian aid missions is a frequent occurrence here, and something the Soldiers enjoy doing, Cox said.

"We actually get to go out and talk to the people, see how they feel about their country and us," Cox said. "A lot of them like us."

Cox explained it is common to see little children wave as they pass by, or hear 'thank you' yelled as they leave an area.

Focusing on the mission is something the troops are taking seriously, said Spc. David E. Witenbarger, a gunner with Co. D and native of Knoxville, Tenn.

"I joined to serve my country, and that's what we're doing here," Witenbarger said.

Though they may not have such luxuries as a dryer, Army uniforms can be seen hanging from clotheslines throughout the day, they are happy with their FOB.

They have a few amenities and extra supplies, plus they are getting a little support from somewhere outside the military chain Cox said.

"We have plenty of hygiene supplies and we get plenty of care packages from home," said Army Sgt. Andrew M. Crenshaw, a squad leader and native of Antioch, Calif. "We have everything we need here."

"The families have been really supportive," Cox added.

The Paratroopers have also made sure that they have left their mark on the place they call home here in Afghanistan, by giving it a new, although unofficial name.

"We gave it the name Fire Base Delta, for Delta Company, so everyone will know who built it," said Keenan.



*Photo by Spc. Matthew Leary/Task Force Fury PAO*

***Lacking a clothes dryer, a Paratrooper from Company D, 2nd Battalion, 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment, hangs his clothing up to dry April 22, 2007, at Fire Base Delta. Along with the rest of their fellow Paratroopers from the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, Co. D is serving a 15 month deployment in Afghanistan during Operation Enduring Freedom VIII.***



# Wall St. to Ardennes St.: financial advisor changes jobs

**Spc. Matthew Leary**

*Task Force Fury PAO*

FORWARD OPERATING BASE WARRIOR, Afghanistan - From working in the high-stakes world of financial securities to conducting dismounted patrols and pulling security, the life of one Paratrooper from the 82nd Airborne Division has greatly changed since he went from being a financial adviser to an airborne infantryman.

Army Cpl. Bryan R. Boender was used to managing upwards of a \$100 million worth of investments when he was working for Merrill Lynch, but despite his good salary and job position, he gave up on the lucrative career.

"I found out it was not so meaningful and fulfilling, and felt something was missing," said Boender, operations noncommissioned officer for Company B, 2nd Battalion, 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team.

For Boender, a native of Seattle, serving his country in uniform had always been a goal, but one he had put off due to other commitments.

"I had almost joined the Army a couple times, after high school and after 9-11," he said.

Upon graduating high school, Boender elected to go to college instead of joining the military, becoming the first of his family to graduate college. He used his degree to pursue his desire to serve the public, working for his local county in the child-support enforcement department, he said.

Boender then furthered his education by attending Rutgers University on academic scholarship, earning himself a Masters of Science and Public Policy from the University.

After graduate school, Boender entered the world of finance at a small brokerage firm, he said. "That set in motion three years of working at Morgan Stanley and Merrill Lynch," he said.

While working for Morgan Stanley, Boender spent a month training at the World Trade Center, making the tragedy all the more personal to him, he said.

He continued to work in finance but began to find the job was lacking something. "It had distanced me from an earlier goal of public service."

Boender left his job in 2003 to find something more meaningful, and found himself in San Diego with friends when he picked up the phone and called the local Army recruiter, he said. 10 weeks later he was at Basic Combat Training at the age of 28.

"I was something I wanted to experience," Boender said about his decision.

sion to enlist. "Despite having the educational background that would have allowed me to be an officer, I enlisted. I wanted to be airborne infantry, serving on the frontlines."

Boender graduated One Station Unit Training and Basic Airborne School at Fort Benning, Ga., and went to Company B, 3rd Battalion, 325th Parachute Infantry Regiment. That unit became Co. B, 2nd Battalion, 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, the unit Boender is still with today while he is deployed in Afghanistan.

Since joining Boender has served as a rifleman on the frontline, and then transitioned to radio telephone operator and operations noncommissioned officer in his company.

And as a Paratrooper in the 82nd Airborne Division, Boender has had to challenge himself in many ways since joining.

"Being 31 years old now, humping 80 plus pounds on my back 15 clicks (kilometers), is difficult," he said. And beyond the physical requirements of the job, Boender has also had to adjust to a new lifestyle in the military.

"To say it was a challenge is an understatement," Boender said. "It was kind of difficult to go from a role of key decision-maker to Soldier. You have to swallow your pride and realize the people around you are experts in their field. You have to trust them with your life."

The hardwork and commitment of Boender has not gone unnoticed by his chain of command.

"He'll always give you a 110% and more," said 1st Sgt. Steven J. Green, first sergeant for Company B.

Boender hasn't decided yet what he will do in the future, but knows that he will continue to serve his country in some capacity. "I'm considering a couple of different options, and I'll take this year to decide. But I do plan on having a connection with the military."

Whatever he decides to do, Boender is glad he made the decision to join the Army.

"I didn't want to regret years later not having served," he said. "The job is rewarding and there's a definite sense of purpose."





# Andar Fury: “Good Old Fashioned Light Infantry Tactics”

**Spc. Matthew Leary**  
*Task Force Fury PAO*

FORWARD OPERATING BASE WARRIOR, Afghanistan - Gusting winds and a dust storm blowing in from the east prevented the CH-47 Chinook helicopter from landing gracefully, its tail end swaying uneasily in the turbulent weather as it touched the ground seconds before the front end.

From their position less than a hundred meters away, the last two groups of Paratroopers from the 82nd Airborne Division darted across the open desert terrain, the perimeter security waiting until the last moment to withdraw and jump on the bird with the rest of their unit.

For the Soldiers of Task Force Fury aboard the helicopter, their exit from the field was a welcomed relief after nearly a week of dismounted patrols and operations, walking over 25 miles with upwards of 80 pounds of equipment, food and water on their back.

Task Force 2 Fury, with the aid of Afghan National Army soldiers, conducted Operation Andar Fury, a large, complex, six-day operation inside the Andar Province April 28 through May 3, bringing a dismounted, company-sized element into Ebrahim Khel, an area that has not previously had a large presence of Coalition Forces.

“That was one of the main goals of the missions, to exert Coalition presence in the area,” said Army 1st Lt. Ernest J. Orlando, executive officer for Company B, 2nd Battalion, 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division, which lead the main effort of the mission.

Company A, 2-508th PIR, ANA forces, and various other attached Soldiers also participated in the mission.

The Paratroopers began their mission late in the evening on April 28, dismounting from the safety of the armored Humvees and walking 12.5 ‘clicks’, nearly 8 miles, to the outskirts of Ebrahim Khel. On their backs, the Paratroopers carried all their combat supplies plus a two day supply of food and water. From then on the entire mission would be conducted without

additional ground support, the only means of re-supply would be from aircraft dropping it from the sky.

“It’s the first time we’ve done a mission in that way,” said Orlando about the decision to enter the town on foot and be re-supplied from the air.

“I think we went back to the basics,” said Spc. Matthew L. Steffen, a M-249 squad automatic weapon gunner with Co. B. “Good old hardcore, light infantry tactics. No vehicles, just pursuing the enemy on foot. If we had gone in by vehicles [Taliban Forces] would have heard us coming and been prepared.”

Over the proceeding days, the Paratroopers would



*Photo by Spc. Matthew Leary/Task Force Fury PAO*  
**Paratroopers from 2nd Battalion, 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, watch an illumination round fired May 2, 2007 while they are out on patrol in the Andar Province, Afghanistan.**

enter the villages in the area during the day, talking to the local Afghans and searching for a Taliban presence. At night the units would typically move one to two miles and set up in a different area.

With many elements moving around in this manner, acting as separate units, the forces were able to establish a greater presence in the area.

“It definitely shows that we’re willing to show our presence and continue to move within an area,” said Army 1st Lt. Brian M. Kitching, a platoon leader with

Co. B. “The Taliban were not able to predict what we would do next. We wanted to clear the area of operations in order to disrupt Taliban [activity], and by our presence we flushed them out.”

Through the patrols with ANA, two AK-47 rifles, one rocket propelled grenade launcher, 3 anti-armor RPG’s, two anti-personnel mines, and a medical cache were recovered.

“I think it went extremely well,” said Kitching. “And we’re still processing all the information.”

By exerting a presence of Coalition Forces and ANA forces, the mission also allowed the leaders of both forces to meet with the local populous and establish a line of trust and cooperation.

“The villagers were initially wary of us, but after spending 48 hours there they were very receptive,” Orlando said.

The acceptance of Coalition Forces by the villagers and the successful completion of the mission were both aided by the support of the ANA, Kitching said. “I enjoyed working with them. They have an extreme dedication to their country and are always working towards the betterment of Afghanistan.”

Seeing the villages, the Paratroopers themselves gleaned a better appreciation of the overall mission in Afghanistan and the importance of it, said Steffen.

“I talked to an old man who said the Taliban took his food and beat him,” Steffen said about one trip into a village.

“We were burning in the heat from all the gear and we were tired, but it was worth it,” Steffen said about having an opportunity to see first hand the difference their anti-Taliban operations are making.

So as the Chinooks touched down May 3 and the Paratroopers jumped aboard, the relief of returning to base and refitting for future missions was coupled with the sense that they actually are making a difference in the lives of the average Afghan, Steffen said.

“We are winning here, but it’s not a war you can really measure though,” he said. “But we know it’s important to help give Afghanistan back to it’s people, for their future.”



# Paratrooper writing book to help deployed Soldiers

**Spc. Matthew Leary**

*Task Force Fury PAO*

**FORWARD OPERATING BASE WARRIOR, Afghanistan** — The sacrifices made by the men and women who serve in the United States Military are often referred to as heroic and selfless. But when it comes to year-long deployments, military spouses are forced to make their own sacrifices and face the same stressful reality of their loved ones being away from them.

One Paratrooper from the 82nd Airborne Division has already seen the effect a combat deployment can have on a marriage or relationship, and has decided to use his free time to try and do something to help other married servicemembers.

While serving with his unit in Afghanistan, Spc. Jared M. Littrell, an infantryman with Company C, 2nd Battalion, 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, has taken it upon himself to write a self-help book designed to help military couples survive the stress of a deployment.

"You have to learn how to communicate in a totally different way," Littrell said about the reality of continuing a relationship during a deployment. "I wanted to write this book so people who wanted to get married while in the military would know what to expect during a deployment."

For Littrell, giving advice on relationships is something he has been doing for years, although he readily admits his advice is based on experience and not formal training.

"I've been through a divorce, and I am remarried now, so I know from my own relationships what is important," he said.

Upon graduation from One Station Unit Training at Fort Benning, Littrell began assisting his fellow Soldiers with their relationships as they entered US Army Airborne School, Littrell said.

"We had just gotten cell phones coming out of basic, and guys were sending text messages to their girlfriends back home," Littrell said.

At this point, Soldiers began asking Littrell for advice on what to say to their girlfriends they hadn't seen in months.

Littrell stepped in and gave what advice he could, and in the process earned himself a new nickname based on a popular movie that had just been released about a man who gives relationship advice.

The Soldiers around him began to call him "Hitch".

Littrell continued to give advice to his fellow Soldiers upon his arrival at Fort Bragg, N.C., and after the 4th BCT arrived here in Afghanistan two months ago.



*Photo by Spc. Matthew Leary/Task Force Fury PAO*

**Spc. Jared M. Littrell, an infantryman with Company C, 2nd Battalion, 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment, holds a photo of him and his wife taken before he deployed here to Afghanistan with his fellow Paratroopers from Task Force Fury. Littrell is spending his free time here writing a self-help book for military couples who are facing the challenge of continuing a relationship during a deployment.**

He noticed an increase in the difficulties his fellow Soldiers were having in their marriages and relationships after the deployment, and he tried to help out.

"He found about my situation and helped me out with it," said "Spc. Antonio Ramirez", a Soldier who did not want his real name used due to the personal nature of the subject.

Ramirez lied to his wife about a relationship he had before they were married, a relationship his wife found out about after he deployed.

"[Littrell] talked to me about it and reminded me that even

though communicating was hard to do, I had to keep trying to talk to her," Ramirez said. "I had to remind her that just because I messed up, doesn't mean I don't love her anymore."

Ramirez welcomed the advice and is still trying to work things out with his wife back home. "It's getting better, but it's still tough," he said.

Littrell is pooling together all his own experiences and those of the Paratroopers around him to form a list of things married servicemembers can expect while deployed, he said.

One of the biggest problems is internet and phone time will be limited or non-accessible for periods of time, and its important for couples to remember what really matters in a relationship.

"My advice would be that it's important for both the Soldier and the spouse to make sure the other knows that they still need them in their life, and they are going to be there for the other when they need them," he said.

He stressed perception is reality, so it's important married couples talk as frequently as possible and remind each other how they feel.

While the book is only in its fledgling stage, Littrell hopes that he can use his time in Afghanistan to finish it.

"It's going to be interesting to see how it develops, and what I learn," he said.

Whether he finishes the book or not, hopefully just focusing on the issue will allow him to maintain his own marriage, as well as help those around him.

"If I can help any one marriage, or any one couple get through a deployment because of what I am going to put out there, that's good enough for me," Littrell said. "And honestly, even if this just stays in a drawer somewhere, I'll be able to give it to my wife and say 'I did this for us.'"



# Toby Keith performs at FOB Salerno

**Pfc. Micah E. Clare**  
Task Force Fury PAO

FORWARD OPERATING BASE SALERNO, Afghanistan — Country-western singer Toby Keith performed at Forward Operating Base Salerno, Afghanistan, May 19, treating hardworking United States troops to some well earned entertainment and something even more valuable, a rousing display of homeland support.

Hundreds of Soldiers, Sailors and Airmen started lining up two hours before the concert to see Keith's performance.

"I've wanted to see this guy since I was 13," said Army Pfc. Tristan P. Winter, a forward observer in Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division. "He's my favorite country music singer, and I'm so excited to finally be able to see him."

When the concert finally started, the large tent was packed with fans, some waving American flags and wearing cowboy hats.

As he came on stage, Keith was met with thunderous applause and cheers.

"This is to all of you, when you're rolling out at night watching each other's back," he said, starting out the night's entertainment.

Keith, whose father was an Army veteran, said he grew up with respect for the military ingrained in him, and tries to show his appreciation any chance he gets.

"I've got a lot admiration for these guy and girls out on these bases who are getting out in the mud," he said.

His multiple tours with United States Overseas show this commitment.

"This is his fifth combat tour," said Rachel M. Tischler, USO director of entertainment. "He's been all over, not only in Iraq and Afghanistan, but in Cuba, Kosovo, Africa, Italy, Germany, and Belgium."

Despite his many performances, this particular tour brought something extra to his fans.

"This is the farthest out I've ever brought a five or six [member]



Photos by Pfc. Micah E. Clare/Task Force Fury PAO

**Pfc. Britney Townsel, a supply specialist in Company B, 508th Special Troops Battalion, 4th Brigade Combat Team, won a guitar signed by country-music singer Toby Keith when he visited Forward Operating Base Salerno, May 19.**

band," Keith said. "They wanted to take a little run so I brought them out here."

"The fact that he came all the way to FOB Salerno is just really awesome," said Army Staff Sgt. Matt Langseth, a tactical operations center non-commissioned officer in charge in the 1st Squadron, 285th Attack Reconnaissance Battalion. "It's good to know that we're supported by people back in the States, by Keith, and by country music."

Other servicemembers also appreciate Keith's patriotism and pride in the sacrifices made by our nation's military.

"He's not afraid to say what he thinks," said Army Staff Sgt. Elizabeth Boyce, an Air Hammer operator in the 513th Military Intelligence Brigade. "He really showed his anger after 9/11, and he didn't try being politically correct about it. I really respect that."

Keith saluted the military audience with his hit songs "American Soldier," and "Courtesy of the Red, White, and Blue," songs reflecting his feelings on fighting the enemies of freedom.

After the closing song and amid a standing ovation, the command team of the 82nd Airborne Division's Task Force Fury presented Keith with a parting gift: an 82nd Airborne Division plaque and a United States flag that was flown over Afghanistan.

"Here's a small token of appreciation for bringing some American freedom to us here at FOB Salerno," said Task Force Fury Commander, Col. Martin Schweitzer.

The evening's show did much to lift the spirits of the troops who attended.

"Sometimes you wonder how much support you have back home," said Army Sgt. Jeremy Vandenburg, a Battle NCO in Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 2nd Battalion, 321st Airborne Field Artillery Regiment. "This really shows me that what I'm doing out here is appreciated, that people back home really do care."



**Country-music singer Toby Keith sign a bomb, "Hello Taliban, Love Toby Keith," at Forward Operating Base Salerno, May 19. Keith and his band performed for the Soldiers of the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division. This was the first time Keith brought a five member band this far out on a combat tour.**



# Ghazni PRT provides assesment in Waghez

**Sgt. Matthew Clifton**

*22nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment*

WAGHEZ DISTRICT, Afghanistan – The Ghazni Provincial Reconstruction Team is a U.S. military unit in the Ghazni Province of Afghanistan charged with assisting in the rebuilding of their province through efforts such as the construction of district centers, schools and medical clinics for the local population.

However, this is not the sole purpose of the Ghazni PRT.

Some related, but different, missions for the team include building a rapport with local leaders and generating assessments of the progress made in specific areas of the province.

These assessments provide a perspective of the ‘attitude’ of an area as well as providing information about the presence of the Taliban and the need for repairs to local facilities.

One such assessment was recently conducted in the Waghez District of Ghazni, where the PRT met with the district sub-governor to discuss issues of security, reconstruction and local support for the government.

“We are at the police headquarters for the district,” said Maj. Jonathan Puleo, executive officer, Ghazni PRT. “The goal is to assess the capabilities and loyalties of the government in this district.”

Meeting with District Sub-Governor Abdul Azim over chai tea, Puleo had a series of questions for Azim aimed at developing a clear picture of the state of things in Waghez.

The last time the PRT came to Waghez, Azim was the Chief of Police for the district. Puleo said.

“What happened to the last Sub-Governor?” Puleo inquired.

“I was the [Chief of Police] until the last Sub-Governor resigned,” Azim said. “I have been Sub-Governor for about two months.”

After this initial confusion, Puleo shifted the focus of his questions to the construction of a district center in the area.

The purpose of the district center is to provide a place for the local government and citizens to hold meetings and carry out other general activities pertaining to the needs of the district, Puleo said.

Bureaucratic red tape has slowed the progress on repairs that need to be made to the center, which has been built but is far from complete Azim said.

Letters need to be sent to the MOI, letters need to be received from the MOI and suppliers need to be contracted to repair the building, he explained.

On top of this, the community has voiced logistical complaints about the location of the center.

Apparently, there was a misunderstanding between to tribes in the district and the center was built too far away from the population, he said.

“Has the center been used at all?” Puleo asked.

“Nobody has used the center,” Azim replied mentioning problems with the roof of the building.

Puleo assured Azim they would confront the quality assurance problems and pressed the issue of logistical complaints.

“The citizens can’t get [to the center] because of security,” Azim said. “We need more forces and check points in our district.”

Weapon and ammunition shortages are directly related to this problem, Azim continued.

Puleo explained Azim should meet with a representative of the MOI to resolve these problems and added that higher Afghanistan National Army and Police recruiting numbers from within the district would also help solve the problem.

Staying focused on the district center, Puleo asked if it would be possible to have a shura, (meeting of elders to discuss local issues), to talk about the building of a new district center in a more appropriate location.

The location of the center should be in the hands of the people who are going to use it, he continued.

“You are most welcome to attend our shura,” Azim said. “They are held every 15 days.”

Puleo thanked Azim for allowing him



*Photo by Sgt. Matthew Clifton/22nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment*

**Army Staff Sgt. Arthur Helburg, squad leader, 2nd Platoon, Company A, 1st Battalion, 158th Infantry Regiment, Ariz. National Guard gives a convoy brief before a mission May 19, 2007 at Forward Operating Base Ghazni, Afghanistan.**

to attend the shura and shifted his attention to the schools in the area.

“What is attendance like at the schools?” Puleo asked. “Are they sharing the school with the girls?”

There is a school that has been graduating students for five years, but it is in need of a new building, and there is a separate school for girls but the attendance is poor because of Taliban interference, Azim replied.

The mention of the Taliban caught Puleo’s attention and when asked about their presence, Azim’s responses seemed somewhat subdued.

This unfortunate turn of events cast a bleak overtone on the end of the meeting, Puleo noticed.

Azim was asked repeatedly if he was threatened by the Taliban, and responded with what seemed like party rhetoric, Puleo said.

It is too soon to determine what exactly is going on in Waghez, and where certain loyalties lie, he continued.

The purpose of the assessment is to determine the capabilities and loyalties of the local government.

Most of the time the evaluation is positive. Sometimes there is a need to investigate an area further, he said.

Progress seldom comes swift and absolute, but with the continuing efforts of the Ghazni PRT and local leaders who are determined to secure a positive and safe future for their district, province and country, hope does.



# Army offers legal services to help Soldiers gain rapid citizenship while deployed

**Spc. Matthew Leary**  
Task Force Fury PAO

FORWARD OPERATING BASE WARRIOR, Afghanistan – For many U.S. servicemembers, their decision to join the military is based on a sense of duty, a call to serve their country.

However, there are thousands of servicemembers deployed to combat zones and risking their lives on the battlefield who cannot technically call the United States “their” country, because they are not American citizens.

Thanks to the legal services offered by the Army and recent changes in immigration laws and procedures, non-citizen Soldiers are now provided a quick and easy way to become a U.S. citizen.

Spc. Juan J. Medel, an infantryman with Company C, 2nd Battalion, 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, who has lived in the United States for over a decade, served in the Army for almost three years and is now deployed to Afghanistan, has seen first hand just how simple it is to become a citizen. Although he is a proud member of the Army, he is not a citizen.

“I heard the process of becoming a citizen was easier if you were in the military, and as soon as the first opportunity came up, I jumped on it,” Medel said about his decision to finally pursue his citizenship after 14 years of living in the U.S. as a legal, permanent resident.

Like Medel, many foreign nationals live in U.S. as permanent residents, a designation that allows them to live and work in the country but without certain rights and privileges given to legal citizens, such as the right to vote in national elections.

In order to gain these rights individuals must apply for naturalization to become a citizen of the United States.

For deployed Soldiers, the naturalization process is indeed simplified and expedited, said Army Cpl. James E. Marcum, paralegal noncommissioned officer, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 782nd Brigade Support Battalion, 4th BCT.



Photo by Spc. Matthew Leary/Task Force Fury PAO

***Spc. Juan J. Medel, an infantryman with Company C, 2nd Battalion, 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, stands in the ruins of a castle here at Forward Operating Base Warrior April 26. Medel has recently taken advantage of the legal services offered by the Army that will allow him to get his U.S. citizenship while he is deployed.***

“There’s normally a permanent residency requirement that is waived because of your military service,” Marcum explained. “Also while you are deployed your packet is put to the front of the line.”

This means the normal naturalization procedure, which may take years, can be completed in as little as four months. Interested Soldiers should know the process does involve paperwork and several legal documents, Marcum said.

“It’s fairly easy, but you do have to go back five years for employment, schools, and residency,” he said. “The hard thing is marriage certificates and birth certificates for children.”

Since it is unlikely deployed Soldiers will have these essential documents, Marcum recommends having family and friends send copies. Unit legal representatives should be able to provide requirements as to the exact information needed for each individual Soldier.

Handling the paperwork is not complicated, and leaders at all levels should encourage their non-citizen troopers to go forward with the process, said Army 1st Lt. Alan M. LeFebvre, a platoon leader with Co. C, 2-508th PIR, who helped Medel in his efforts to become a citizen. Even those who have never dealt with the issue before will be able to successfully complete the steps due

to the simplicity of the naturalization process for deployed Soldiers.

“I didn’t know a lot about it either, but other leaders stressed its importance to me,” he said. “It was really easy. There are some requirements but it’s definitely something [commanders] should encourage.”

The Army provides workshops in combat zones where units can send Soldiers to fill out the required paperwork free of charge. In fact, the entire process can be completed without a single financial cost to the trooper, Medel said.

Medel hopes to become an official citizen by November of this year. He has completed the paperwork but still needs to pass a citizenship examination that will test his knowledge of American history and government.

Soldiers should realize there is no drawback to taking the time to apply for naturalization, while the increased rights given to citizens are notable, Medel said.

By becoming a citizen doors are opened inside and outside the military, in terms of jobs, benefits and opportunities. Medel hopes to parlay his citizenship into a career in aviation, a career field that often has a prerequisite of being a United States citizen.

“He’s a good Soldier, risking his life and doing more for [the U.S.] than a lot of people do day-to-day,” LeFebvre said. “He should be given the opportunity to be a citizen.”

For Marcum, helping in the naturalization process is a rewarding experience, and one that recognizes the hard work and efforts of patriots. Soldiers across the Army who have not yet gained their citizenship should be aware of the advantage and ease of obtaining citizenship while deployed.

And again, visiting your unit legal representative is priority number one to make sure the process goes smoothly and troopers receive the right to call the U.S. “their” home, Marcum said.

“They should absolutely take advantage of this,” he said. “They are serving their country and they should be given the opportunity above anybody else.”



# Task Force Fury helps Afghan National Police stand on their feet in Khowst

**Pfc. Micah E. Clare**  
Task Force Fury PAO

FORWARD OPERATING BASE SALERNO, Afghanistan--Task Force Fury Soldiers are concentrating their efforts this month on helping the Afghan National Police in Khowst Province take charge of their areas of operation.

Paratroopers and Military Police from the 82nd Airborne Division's Task Force Professional have been able to spend more time with the ANP after establishing a permanent presence at the Bak District Center, a central location for several Khowst ANP stations.

"We're here to help increase the strength [of the ANP] in this area," said Army 2nd Lt. Finn Fraser, platoon leader for 3rd Platoon, 546th Military Police Company, 385th MP Battalion., 3rd Sustainment Bde., 3rd Infantry Division. "We're also working on instilling pride and efficiency in them by increasing their law enforcement capabilities."

Fraser's men started the work at the Sabari District Center on May 8, when they began the task of preparing the station for the arrival of more policemen from the training center in Gardez.

As part of the preparation, Army Staff Sgt. Derrick Mullinex, a squad leader in 3rd Platoon, supervised as the Afghan policemen brought out all of their weapons and equipment and inventoried them.

"This lets them know what their strength is, and shows them how many new policemen can be equipped here," Mullinex said, after labeling, photographing, and recording the station's arsenal of AK-47s, Hungarian AMD-65s, Czechoslovakian SA-58 assault rifles, machine guns and Rocket Propelled Grenade launchers.

Next, attention was focused on organization at the squad level and below, something most Afghan policemen aren't

used to, explained Mullinex.

He appointed a squad leader over one group of policemen, and then explained to him the need to have subordinate leaders controlling smaller groups of men, and who can replace him in an emergency.

"When they establish a chain of command within the squad, it really builds unity and also eliminates confusion," Mullinex said.

By conducting all operations and training as a squad, the team will get to know each other better and form a bond, he said.

The next day at the Bak district center, Paratroopers from the 2nd Battalion, 321st Airborne Field Artillery Regiment and the 1st Battalion 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment built up the ANP's proficiency and confidence in running road checkpoints.

Setting up on a main road just outside the district center, the ANP were taught the standards associated with searching civilians.

Procedures such as keeping a safe distance away from a vehicle when it first pulls up, letting the driver open all of the doors and moving away from the vehicle to be searched, and searching the vehicle thoroughly are stressed to the policemen, explained Army Staff Sgt. Jesse English, a section chief in Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 2-321 AFAR.

"Paying attention to detail, that's the most important thing for these guys to learn," he said.

"We really try to develop the guys who we see are trying to do their jobs well," said Spc. Christopher Gilbert, an unmanned aerial vehicle specialist in HHB. "It's very satisfying when you see them learning and putting into action what we've taught them."

Despite the sometimes less than perfect conditions the ANP in Khowst must face, they still keep doing their jobs and are eager to learn, said Afghan National Police Sgt. Toti Han, an ANP squad leader.

"This can be a really tough job, but we are all here voluntarily," he said. "We are really glad that we are being helped on patrols and being taught the right things to do until we get more men."



Photo by Pfc. Micah E. Clare/Task Force Fury PAO

**2nd Lt. Finn Fraser, platoon leader for 3rd Platoon, 546th Military Police Company, 3rd Infantry Division, gives instructions to a newly designated Afghan National Police squad leader on how to move his squad in a staggered column during patrols May 8 at the Sabari District Center in Khowst Province, Afghanistan. Fraser's platoon is part of a team from the 82nd Airborne Division's Task Force Fury that is strengthening the capabilities of the ANP in several Khowst districts.**



# Fury commander, Afghan Governor, Police, Army work together to unite Afghanistan

**Sgt. Matthew Clifton**

*22nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment*

FORWARD OPERATING BASE GHAZNI, Afghanistan – The Afghanistan National Army and Police have grown by leaps and bounds from their humble but determined origins more than six years ago to create an emerging force of capable, passionate troops ready and willing to destroy those who would oppress their fledgling democracy.

The Afghan government and military, along with U.S. and International Security Assistance Forces routinely meet and work in cooperation to develop new and effective ways to obliterate the enemy and earn the confidence and respect of the population.

One such meeting brought together the minds of some of the top leaders of the Ghazni Province to discuss details of operations aimed at instilling trust of the government into the local residents.

Governor Marijadeen Pataan, governor of the Ghazni Province has a vision of what the province could be.

“Ghazni has a great potential for growth,” he said. “Expanding cities by building roads, shopping centers and thousands of houses will make the province a great place.”

Unfortunately, there are security issues, namely the presence of the Taliban and their shadow governments in certain areas, that must be dealt with in order for Pataan’s vision to reach fruition.

Hence the meeting at FOB Ghazni, bringing Pataan, Afghan National Army and Police generals and the commander of the 82nd Airborne Division’s 4th Brigade Combat Team and Task Force Fury together to hash out the details of an upcoming operation.

“We must remove shadow governments from Ghazni,” said Col. Martin Schweitzer, commander, Task Force Fury, 4th BCT. “We have worked together to form a plan to separate the enemy from the population and allow the government to move freely throughout the area.”

Schweitzer reminisced on past instances where he has personally seen local Afghans support their government after key leaders made the effort to get personally involved with their citizens.

However, the governor’s part is but one piece of the puzzle.

Each organization is essential to the success of operations in Ghazni. The government must work with the people by attending Shuras, (meetings of local elders). The ANA must lead operations, the ANP must have a strong local presence to ensure security and the U.S. and ISAF must be there for support, Schweitzer said.

“We are one muscle,” he continued. “The U.S. will follow be-

hind the ANA and ANP to plant the governmental seeds so the people have a choice.”

Pataan, who alluded to his fighting against the soviets, reiterated the need for a permanent force to be present to deter any attempts by the Taliban to reoccupy areas that will be cleared during the upcoming events.

On top of the presence of ANA and ANP troops to secure the area following the operation, an element of U.S. Soldiers are being moved to Ghazni, Schweitzer said reassuringly.

The formation, and already successful employment, of an all-Afghan counterinsurgency force added to the depth of the mission allowing for the pursuit of high-value targets.

With multiple agencies at work to provide a secure future for Ghazni, Pataan is determined to make sure there is ‘no chance’ for the enemy to reestablish itself in his province.

“This year will be a very bad year for the Taliban,” Pataan said grinningly.

“This year has already been a bad year for the Taliban,” Schweitzer was quick to respond referencing off the top of his head numerous failed attempts by the enemy to cause destruction and casualties.

But he was swift to note he did not expect this operation to be a triumph over all the Taliban in Ghazni.

“I’m not going to pretend this mission will declare victory,” he said. “But it will buy time for the government to establish a presence in the area.”

Schweitzer compared what he saw of Afghan forces in 2002 to what he sees now and is certain the ANA and ANP possess the passion and dedication to sacrifice whatever they must to provide a secure future.

One of the biggest reasons for the overwhelming level of confidence Schweitzer has in the success of the upcoming operation is the organization of the plan.

“It is an Afghan solution to an Afghan problem,” he explained noting the plan was the brainchild of an Afghan general, not a U.S. commander.

As the meeting ended Pataan somberly thanked Schweitzer for his help and issued his confidence in the ANA and ANP taking the lead role in this operation.

“I do not want to see a single American killed on our fields,” he said. “We will use our own guys and I know we will have the upper hand.

“The Taliban kills teachers and burns schools,” he continued. “They are not only the enemy of us, they are the enemy of civilization.”



*Photo by Sgt. Matthew Clifton/22nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment*

**Governor Marijadeen Pataan, (left), governor, Ghazni Province, Afghanistan speaks with Colonel Martin P. Schweitzer, Task Force Fury Commander, during a conference focusing on an upcoming operation May 17, 2007 at Forward Operating Base Ghazni, Afghanistan.**



# 1/503 replaces 2/87 in Paktika after 16 months

**Spc. Matthew Leary**

*Task Force Fury PAO*

FORWARD OPERATING BASE ORGUN-E, Afghanistan – Paratroopers from the 173rd Brigade Combat Team officially announced their arrival to Afghanistan Thursday in front of a crowd of Afghan leaders, local citizens and International Assistance Security Force Soldiers, during a Transfer of Authority ceremony held here at Forward Operating Base Orgun-E.

The incoming Paratroopers of the 1st Battalion (Airborne), 503rd Infantry Regiment, and their commander, Army Lt. Col. Michael R. Fenzel, assumed responsibility of the eastern portion of the Paktika province from the Soldiers of the 2nd Battalion, 87th Infantry Regiment, 3rd BCT, 10th Mountain Division, commanded by Army Lt. Col. Chris Toner.

“As we assume this critically important

mission, we do it with an eye toward the day when prosperity and security are enduring forces, and the reach of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan touches every citizen in Paktika,” Fenzel said.

The 1-503rd Inf. Bn. Will be serving in the southern portion of Regional Command- East, under the command of the 4th BCT, 82nd Airborne Division.

The remaining elements of the 173rd BCT will be relieving the 3rd BCT, 10th Mtn. Div. in the north.

For the 173rd BCT, conducting combat operations and helping the IROA in reconstruction efforts is not a new assignment.

The brigade had served a previous deployment to Afghanistan in 2005.

“Your team is no stranger to the war on terror,” said Army Col. Martin P. Schweitzer, commander of Task Force Fury. “I am certain your team will take it to another level.”

A large emphasis was placed upon the fact the battalion will focus its effort on assisting with the deployment of the Afghan economy and security forces in the region.

Over the past 16 months, the 2-87th Inf. Bn., has successfully cultivated a good working relationship with the local governments, and achieved significant improvements in the regions economy and infrastructure, said Toner.

“In the past five years we have made progress, progress never seen in the history of Afghanistan,” agreed Dr. Akram Khapalwak, Governor of Paktika. “There are visible achievements in the efforts of reconstruction. On behalf of my government and my people, the service of you and your Soldiers over the past 16 months



*Photos by Pfc. Daniel M. Rangel/22nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment*

**Command Sgt. Maj. Jose M. Vega and Army Lt. Col. Chris R. Toner of 2-87 Infantry put away their battalion colors at the transfer of authority ceremony May 24 at FOB Orgun-E.**

has been tremendous. I welcome the new unit, and I look forward to working with them and I hope to continue the great job done here.”

For the outgoing 2-87th Inf. Bn., the ceremony marked the end of the 16 month deployment.

While much success has been achieved, the unit solemnly remembers the loss of four of its Soldiers and the loss of man Afghan National Army soldiers who served along side their troops, Toner said.

“We know that this progress is not without cost,” he said.

So as the 2-87th Inf. Bn. Returns to Fort Drum, N.Y., and the 1-503rd Inf. Bn. returns to Afghanistan, it is done with an eye to successes of the past 16 months and the goals of future achievement.

“The paratroopers of Task Force Eagle(1-503rd Inf. Bn.) pledge to build on the remarkable success of the Task Force Catamount(2-87th Inf. Bn.),” Fenzel said.



**Army Lt. Col. Michael R. Fenzel, 1st Battalion (Airborne), 503rd Infantry, prepares to display his battalion colors at the transfer of authority ceremony May 24 at FOB Orgun-E.**



# FURY FOTOS



Photo by Spc. Matthew Leary/Task Force Fury PAO

**Cpl. Bryan R. Boender points out something suspicious on the horizon to Army Pfc. Timmothy M. Mailliard while the two are out on patrol in the Andar Province of Afghanistan. Boender and Mailliard are part of the 2nd Battalion, 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division.**



**An Afghan National Policeman stands guard during a ceremony celebrating the opening of a new district center in the Sabari District of Khowst Province, Afghanistan May 16.**

Photo by  
Pfc. Micah E. Clare  
/Task Force Fury PAO



Photo by Pfc. Micah E. Clare/Task Force Fury PAO

**Polish Major Mark Pierkarski, a Polish military field surgeon, works to stop the bleeding of an electronic medical mannequin during a Combat Lifesaver Class May 5, at Forward Operating Base Salerno, Afghanistan. To prepare them for conducting joint operations with U.S. forces, the medics are being given a CLS class to familiarize them with American medical procedures, as well as to give them their last refresher course before they go out on missions. "This course is very good, because of how realistic it is," said Pierkarski. Once the medics move down to their FOBs and firebases, they will work jointly with U.S. medics in aid stations.**



Photo by Spc. Matthew Leary/Task Force Fury PAO

*1st Sgt. Steven J. Green communicates with the pilots of the incoming CH-47 Chinook helicopter as the Paratroopers from Company B, 2nd Battalion, 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment, prepare to leave the field after six days of combat patrols in the Andar Province of Afghanistan.*



Photo by Pfc. Micah E. Clare/Task Force Fury PAO

*Spc. Thomas May, a rifleman from 2nd Platoon, 1st Battalion, 151st Infantry Regiment of the Arizona National Guard pulls security in preparation for a ceremony celebrating the opening of a new district center in Khowst Province, Afghanistan May 15. May is a native of Phoenix, Az.*



Photo by Pfc. Micah E. Clare/Task Force Fury PAO

*A 155 millimeter howitzer fires at a target in eastern Afghanistan. The howitzer is crewed by Paratroopers from the 2nd Battalion, 321st Airborne Field Artillery Regiment, and artillerymen from the Puerto Rican National Guard's 1st Bn. 162nd FAR.*



# Lest we forget



**Spc. Jeremy R. Greene**  
Company A, 2/87th IR  
June 19, 1982 - April 28, 2007

Cpl. Jeremy R. Greene, 24, was an Infantryman assigned to A Company, 2nd Battalion, 87th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team was killed in April 28 of a non-combat related injury.

A native of Springfield, Ohio, Greene enlisted in the Army in February 2004 and completed basic and advanced individual training at Fort Benning, Ga.

He was initially assigned to Fort Drum and 3rd BCT in June 2004.

He deployed with his unit to Afghanistan in February 2006.

His awards and decorations include the Army Good Conduct Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Afghanistan Campaign Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Overseas Service Ribbon, NATO Medal and the Combat Infantryman Badge.

He is survived by his mother and father.



**Maj. Larry J. Bauguess**  
HHC, 4th BSTB  
December 1, 1970 - May 14 2007

Maj. John L. Bauguess Jr., 36, Operations Officer for the 508th Special Troops Battalion, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division died from gunshot wounds sustained during an attack that occurred after a meeting with Afghan and Pakistan military and civilian leadership, in Pakistan.

Bauguess, originally from Florida, deployed with the 4th BCT in support of Operation Enduring Freedom in January 2007. He is remembered by his peers as a disciplined and hard working officer and an extremely dedicated family man.

Bauguess' awards and decorations include the Bronze Star with one oak leaf cluster and "V" device for valour, Purple Heart, Meritorious Service Medal with three oak leaf clusters, Army Commendation Medal with oak leaf cluster, Army Achievement Medal with two oak leaf clusters, National Defense Service Medal with oak leaf cluster, Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, Afghanistan Campaign Medal, Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Korean Defense Service Medal, Army Service Ribbon, Overseas Service Ribbon with three numeral device, NATO Medal, the Combat Infantryman's Badge, and the Expert Infantryman's Badge. He was Ranger Tabbed and a current and qualified Master Rated Jumpmaster.

Bauguess is survived by his wife, Wesley, and his two daughters.



**Pfc. Joseph G. Harris**  
Company C, 2/508th PIR  
May 26, 1987 - April 20, 2007

Pfc. Joseph G. Harris, 19, a Rifleman with Charlie Company, 2nd Battalion, 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment died from non-combat related causes at Forward Operating Base Warrior, Southern Afghanistan, Thursday, May 3.

Harris was from Sugar Land, Texas and was assigned to 3rd Platoon C Co. 2/508th upon his arrival to Fort Bragg in January 2007.

Pfc. Harris' awards and decorations include, Army Achievement Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Afghanistan Campaign Medal, Overseas Service Ribbon, Army Service Ribbon, and Basic Parachutist Badge.



**Spc. Agustin Gutierrez**  
Company B, 782nd BSB  
June 9, 1987 - March 28, 2007



**Sgt. Edmund W. McDonald**  
Company B, 782nd BSB  
March 14, 1982 - March 28, 2007



**Staff Sgt. Casey D. Combs**  
2/508th PIR  
April 4, 1979 - April 12, 2007



**Sgt. David A. Stephens**  
Company B, 2/508th PIR  
November 9, 1978 - April 12, 2007



**Sgt. Alexander van Aalten**  
Company D, 1/508th PIR  
September 2, 1985 - April 20, 2007



# "Fury Fit" to Fight the Good Fight

Ah, summer. That beautiful time of year when: the kids are out of school, the pool is full, sun screen is slathered, and the beach umbrellas sprout in the sand like weeds in your garden.

For many of us it is also the time of year when we think of those two wonderful little letters: "R&R."

Whether you are anxiously awaiting your turn this summer, or have selected the delayed gratification of your big break later in the deployment I share here some bits of R&R wisdom.

This is certainly not an exhaustive list. But, it does represent insight gathered from families and single Soldiers throughout the past six years.

1. Clearly communicate your expectations for your R&R with every member of your family and invite them to do the same with you. (See some sample questions below.)

2. Be conservative with your expectations regarding how much you want to do during your two weeks. Take into account whether you are single or married with 17 children.

3. Some families have chosen to go somewhere "for vacation" rather than stay at home. This avoids confusion of roles and misunderstanding of what has changed at home.

4. If you stay home view yourself as a "guest" for the first few days. Remember that you are breaking your family's or friends' groove by your return. They have had to "move on" without you being there.

5. Give your immediate family at least a few days before hosting or traveling to meet extended family members.

6. Budget your time, your finances, your energy, and your focus. You probably can't see all your friends and family inside the R&R window. (If you have that few friends you probably need to see your Chaplain!)

7. Be prepared that your young "bundle of joy" may not know, recognize, or remember you. If it happens, remember that it's normal.

8. Remember that one year to a two year old is like ten years to a 20 year old.

9. Affirm and re-affirm your children. Recognize accomplishments. Go easy on "restoring order" in your home.

10. Expect sexual tension. It's actually good for your marriage.

11. If your spouse has "acquired" all your drawer and closet space and you have to live out of a suitcase for two weeks remember that you read it here first!

12. Put down the remote and back away. You can catch up on AFN TV after you get back.

13. The same problems or relationship challenges you had before deployment are still there. They didn't get resolved by themselves.

14. Expect changes. The "normal" you knew before deployment does not exist anymore. You will, however, establish a new "normal" in due time. Probably not, in two weeks though. That's your task after redeployment.

## R&R Conversation Starters - Before return:

What do you expect the first 24 hours to look like?

What are your priorities during this short time?

What are those things you wish to accomplish?

How much do you want me to tell you?

What do you think will be the hardest part of our R&R?

How much money do we want to spend?

## R&R Conversation Starters - During R&R:

How have you succeeded during this separation?

What do you miss?

What are you looking forward to getting back to?

What do you think will be the hardest part of the rest of the deployment?

How can we make the "goodbye" successful (or at least as painless as possible)?

The investment of a little planning and thought will reap huge dividends in helping to maximize your joy during R&R. We'll see you when you get back!

Peace...

**Chaplain Larry Pundt**  
**Task Force Fury**

Please continue to keep in prayer the families of SGT McDonald, SPC Gutierrez, SSG Combs, SGT Stephens, SGT VanAalten, SGT Greene, and MAJ Bauguess



*Spec. Lejon Hamann, a mortar man with Company B, 2nd Battalion, 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, pull security at the patrol base he and his fellow Paratroopers established May 2, 2007 in the Andar Province of Afghanistan. 2-508th PIR conducted Operation Andar Fury April 28-May 3, a six-day mission aimed at disrupting Taliban presence in the area. (Photo by Spec. Matthew Leary/Task Force Fury PAO)*

